# Random Encounters The Crawling Jungle

By James Jacobs



## The Rise of the Crawling Jungle

Eons ago, a steaming, jungle-covered layer of the Abyss known as N'gharl was condensed down to the size of a human head as punishment for that realm's vile overlord by a gathering of ancient deities. The condensed layer became known as the N'gharl Seed, and it was cast out of the Abyss and onto the Astral Plane by these deities. They promptly forgot it existed, and eventually it found its way to the Prime Material Plane.

Once it arrived here, a curious thing happened. The seed bonded with the jungle surrounding its arrival point, transforming the area into a smaller version of its former glory. Likewise, the inhabitants of the jungle warped and became fiendish mockeries of their original form. Then, a large tyrannosaurus, driven insane by an infestation of brain parasites, stumbled upon the N'gharl Seed, mistook it for food, and ate it. The seed instability transformed the dispanying to be provided by a control of the seed.





His madness cured by the transformation, Azuvidexus became a truly terrible incarnation of Abyssal might. With his newly enhanced intelligence and potent new powers, he quickly overwhelmed a local tribe of wild elves, forcing them to become his worshipers and establishing the Cult of the Ravenous Maw. As Azuvidexus wandered, the N'gharl Seed inside him continued to warp and transform the terrain around him to a radius of 10 miles, creating the appearance of a mobile jungle. Word of this terrible region spread quickly, and both adventurers and cultists-to-be were drawn to it. The place became known as the Crawling Jungle.

Eventually, a group of powerful elven adventurers penetrated to the jungle's core and slew Azuvidexus. As he died, his body collapsed in on itself and reformed into the N'gharl Seed, which then vanished entirely. But it didn't vanish forever... one hundred years later, the seed manifested again, but this time it formed in a temperate region thousands of miles from its last lair. The appearance of a steaming jungle filled with monstrous vermin and fiendish dinosaurs wreaked havoc on the local elven populace. And with the return of the Crawling Jungle came Azuvidexus, who began to rebuild his cult anew. As word of the jungle spread again, surviving cultists traveled across the continent to rejoin their master.

Azuvidexus was eventually slain again, but the cycle repeated itself; each time he was slain, he and the Crawling Jungle appeared again one hundred years later in some random and often incongruous location elsewhere in the world. And each time it appeared, it brought new terror to a new region. The N'gharl Seed seems to have some strange affinity for the elven race, and most of its appearances have been near or even in elven lands.

It has been about a century since the jungle's last appearance . . . so the time is nigh for the return of the Crawling Jungle!

### Random Encounters in the Crawling Jungle

Adventurers brave enough to explore the Crawling Jungle have more to fear than these hazards, though, for the place is infested with all manner of fiendish monsters and outsiders. The majority of the denizens are fiendish dinosaurs or fiendish monstrous vermin, although many outsiders use the realm as a hunting ground. Cultists of the Ravenous Maw are also commonly encountered.

Once every 4 hours spent in the jungle, there is a 40% chance of encountering one of its denizens. This chance is halved if the adventurers are taking precautions to avoid encounters, such as traveling invisibly or making a camp in a secretive area. The thick foliage and omnipresent fog in the jungle serves to mask creatures so that most encounters start at a range of  $2d6 \times 5$  feet (average 35 feet).

If an encounter occurs, roll on the appropriate column on the table below (for day or for night) to determine what is encountered. You should tailor the number of monsters encountered to provide a challenge for your particular group of characters. Note that several of the monsters on this encounter list are quite powerful even when alone. Most of the monsters on this encounter list are detailed in the *Monster Manual*, but some are from other sources. These additional monsters are notated with a code that indicates where they are detailed; if you do not have access to the source in question simply re-roll the encounter.

	01	Abyssal Ant Swarm [2]
01	02-03	Azuvidexus, the Ravenous Maw [6]
	04-07	Black Pudding
	08-12	Bonespear [2]
02-03		Chuul
04-09	13-15	Cultists of the Ravenous Maw [5], Hunting Party
10-12	16-17	Cultists of the Ravenous Maw [5], Warband
13-20	18-21	Cultists of the Ravenous Maw [5], Patrol
21-28	22	Cultists of the Ravenous Maw [5], Slave Caravan
	23	Demon, Alkilith [2]
	24-25	Demon, Bebilith
	26-29	Demon, Chasme [4]
	30	Demon, Hezrou
	31-32	Demon, Succubus
	33-34	Devil, Erinyes
	35	Devil, Ghargatula [4]
29-32	36-38	Devil, Osyluth
33-36	39-41	Dinosaur, Fiendish Allosaurus [1]
37-39	42-44	Dinosaur, Fiendish Ankylosaurus [1]
40-46	45-50	Dinosaur, Fiendish Deinonychus
47-50	51-53	Dinosaur, Fiendish Megaraptor
51-52	54	Dinosaur, Fiendish Seismosaurus [1]
53-54	55	Dinosaur, Fiendish Spinosaurus [1]
55-58	56-57	Dinosaur, Fiendish Triceratops
59-61	58-59	Dinosaur, Fiendish Tyrannosaurus
62	60	Flesh Jelly [1]
63-64		Greenvise [1]
65	61-63	Monstrous Centipede, Fiendish Colossal
66-68	64-69	Monstrous Centipede, Fiendish Gargantuan
69	70-72	Monstrous Spider, Fiendish Colossal
70-72	73-77	Monstrous Spider, Fiendish Gargantuan
73-77	78-84	Monstrous Spider, Fiendish Huge
78-80	85-86	Ochre Jelly
81-83		Plague Ant Swarm [2]
84-86		Praying Mantis, Giant Fiendish
87-88		Red Sundew [1]
89-90		Shambling Mound
91-92	87-90	Slasrath [2]
93-94		Spider Eater, Fiendish
95-96		Stag Beetle, Giant Fiendish
97-98		Tendriculos
99-100		Viper Swarm [2]
	91-96	Will-o'-wisp
	97-99	Yugoloth, Canoloth [3]
	100	Yugoloth, Mezzoloth [3]

- [1] = Monster Manual II
- [2] = Fiend Folio
- [3] = Manual of the Planes
- [4] = Book of Vile Darkness
- [5] = This monster is detailed in Part 3 of The Crawling Jungle
- [6] = This monster is detailed in Part 4 of The Crawling Jungle

# Introducing the Crawling Jungle to Your Campaign

The N'gharl Seed manifests somewhere near or in the home region of the player characters.
 Perhaps they are hired to investigate this sudden appearance of a 20-mile-wide jungle, or maybe the jungle has manifested over their hometown or base of operations while they were off on some

adventure.

- While researching something else entirely, a PC might stumble across a reference to the Crawling Jungle. This reference might hint at a buried treasure in the jungle, perhaps a lost city made of gold, or something similarly enticing but ultimately misleading. Of course, when the PCs travel to the supposed location of the Crawling Jungle, they find nothing of the sort. Unfortunately, their curiosity on the subject raises the ire and suspicion of the local elven population, who still bears the terror of the jungle's last manifestation in their memories. The elves become violent and may even attack characters who they mistake for cultists seeking their ancient master.
- An insane wizard needs a fabulously rare spell component -- the tooth of a half-fiend tyrannosaurus -- to complete a ritual. To harvest this tooth, the wizard intends to manually awaken the N'gharl Seed and force it to manifest at a convenient nearby location; the PCs learn of his plot and must stop him before he manifests the Crawling Jungle in the heart of the busiest city on the coastline.

## **Bringing the Parts Together**

Although random encounters usually happen by chance, some DMs may wish to tie these four parts together into something that could lead to further adventures. Part 4 of this series introduces some ways to tie all of these together, though you'll see some shorter methods in parts 2 and 3!

### Coming in Part 2 of the Crawling Jungle

Find out about the various hazards and diseases that await explorers of the Crawling Jungle.

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